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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A STUDY OF

SCRIABIN'S THIRD SONATA, OP. 23

by

(C) SANDRA MURIEL HUNT

AN ESSAY

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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To Ernesto Lejano

"Our best thoughts come from others."

Emerson

ABSTRACT

The first chapter of this essay discusses Alexander Scriabin's life and works, both musical and literary, and their interrelationship over four periods. The second chapter is a detailed analysis of the Third Sonata, examining its harmonic, textural, and rhythmic aspects, as well as thematic relationships and developmental techniques. The concluding chapter explores the influence both of Scriabin's metaphysical ideas and his exploitation of the piano sound on the style and dramatic effect of the Third Sonata, Op. 23.

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Chapter 1

THE MUSIC AND LIFE OF ALEXANDER SCRIABIN

Alexander Scriabin devoted his musical genius almost entirely to compositions for piano and orchestra. The backbone of his output, the five symphonies and the twelve sonatas, together with the many smaller piano pieces written throughout his career, form the body of his work.

Hugh Macdonald, in his study Skryabin, suggests a division of the compositions into four stages:

1883-1901 ending with the Second Symphony
1902-1904 ending with the Third Symphony or Divine Poem
1905-1908 ending with the Poem of Ecstasy
1908-1914 ending with Five Preludes Op. 74[1]

The chronology of Scriabin's music represents both a progression in quality and in style. His evolution as a late nineteenth-century derivative Romantic to a composer of progressive originality occurred over a thirty-one year span and was markedly influenced by conditions and events in his personal development. Disinterested in the works of contemporary composers, he ultimately isolated himself in an intense private world nurtured by his infatuation with mysticism, his philosophical speculations, and his uniquely daring, sophisticated music.

Period I: 1883-1901

Scriabin was born on Christmas Day, 1871 of the old style Julian calendar (or January 6, 1872, new style Gregorian calendar).

His mother, a prize pupil of Leschetitzky at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, died when Scriabin was one. His father, whose family traditionally followed military careers, entered the Foreign Service. As a result, an aunt, a great-aunt, and a grandmother raised him, spoiling him, and perhaps nourishing the seeds of his adult egomania. Scriabin entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1887 as a piano pupil of Vassily Safanov, himself a student of both Anton and Nikolai Rubenstein. Delicately built, Scriabin was regarded at the Conservatory as an original and prodigiously gifted pianist, even among such colleagues as Rachmaninoff, Joseph Hoffman, and Josef Lhevinne. As a pianist, he was known for his refined pedalling, a rare awareness of tonal coloring, and a free, improvisational rubato. The piano was a "native" medium of expression for Scriabin. Because of this, both comprehension of Scriabin's works and their effective performance demand a thorough and imaginative understanding of the piano's expressive qualities.

At the Conservatory Scriabin became acquainted with the virtuoso nineteenth-century piano repertoire of Western European composers. Liszt's experimentation in thematic metamorphosis and the diabolic element in many of his program pieces may have been direct inspirations for Scriabin. His small character pieces bear a kinship to the works of Chopin, not only in their intimacy of musical expression, but even in their titles: impromptu, waltz, mazurka, prelude, and nocturne. These miniatures, according to James Samson, have already a

> . . . strikingly individual [harmonic language], with a preference for seventh and fourth chords, which although they are treated as dissonances, give the music a distinctive and prophetic harmonic coloring. . . . The consistent evasion of orthodox cadential resolution to the tonic . . . is characteristic of the early Preludes and Studies, many of which arrive at a clear statement of their central tonality only at the final cadence. In the extended works of the same period, on the other hand, traditional sonata and ternary structures are articulated by means of clearly-defined tonalities.[2]

The rigorous counterpoint training he received in the classes of Sergei Taneieff strengthened this aspect of his technique, a compositional device appearing often in the developments of his early sonatas. But, as harmony became more and more important in the later works, the melodic and contrapuntal lines were fragmented in the service of harmonic interest.

One other influence in his formative years must have been Wagner, for his early style has thoroughly absorbed Wagnerian mannerisms: the diminished sevenths, the augmented and Neapolitan sixth chords, and the elaborately ornamented chromatic sequences which obscure the tonality. Scriabin understands the equivocal function of chords in certain contexts and exploits them as in the standard usage of the late nineteenth century.

Upon graduation in 1892, he began a concertizing career, promoting his compositions exclusively. A talented pianist Vera Issakovich married him in 1897 and bore him four children. The first, a girl, arrived in the summer of 1898 as Scriabin was completing his Third Sonata, one of his two large-scale piano works in four movements. (The other is the Fantasy-Sonata, Op. 19, in G-sharp minor of 1892-1897.) By that time, his <u>oeuvre</u> included the

Studies Op. 8, the Preludes Op. 11, three sonatas, and the Piano Concerto. During the final years of his early period, 1898-1901, he concentrated on orchestral works, completing the miniature Rêverie, Op. 24, the First Symphony, Op. 26, and the Second Symphony, Op. 29.

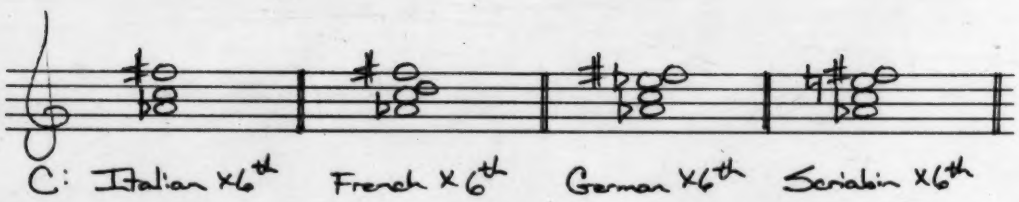
Period II: 1902-1904

Scriabin's life, music, and ideas underwent radical changes between 1902 and 1904, the years defining the second period. From 1898 to 1904, he held a piano professorship at the Moscow Conservatory. Finding that it taxed his creative energy he resigned. The sponsor of his tours and publisher of his works, M. Belaieff, died in 1903, to be replaced as Scriabin's benefactor by the wealthy Margarita Morozova. His youthful infatuation for Vera faded and he eventually left her, although she continued to give all-Scriabin recitals to her death. Tatyana Schloezer was his new love, ten years younger than Vera, impressionable, and perhaps spiritually more akin to him.

From the age of seventeen, Scriabin had been writing philosophical journals and reading Schopenhauer, the Frenchman Ernest Renan, and, around the time of Op. 23, Nietzsche. Tatyana encouraged him to record his own egocentric, disjointed ideas. Increasingly, Scriabin saw his compositions as the expression of his mental world, and ascribed a mystical, philosophical, or fantastic meaning to each work. The Divine Poem, Op. 43, for example, begun in 1902, finished in 1904, is subtitled by movement: "Luttes", "Voluptes", and "Jeu Divin". Noteworthy in its condensation of sonata form, the Fourth Sonata, Op. 50 is accompanied by a poem about stars, mystery, desire,

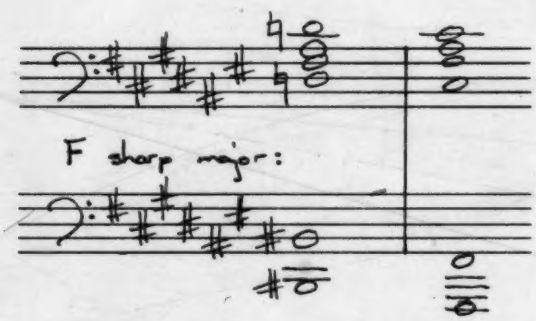
and flight, and bears such musical directions as quietissimo and focosamente guibiloso (fiery jubilation). These imaginative indications are initially all in Italian, but shift to French in the Sixth Sonata and all subsequent opera. They vary from instructions to the player as for instance comme un murmure confus (like a confused murmur), to programmatic notes such as écroulement formidable (formidable collapse) or Le rêve prend forme (the dream takes on form). Especially evocative in the final works, these directions convey the atmospheres of each piece much more successfully than do Scriabin's poems or notebooks.

Other hallmarks of his evolving style in this period include increased use of dominant function chords with a raised, lowered, or double alteration of the fifth degree. These altered chord sonorities arise more and more often in the later works and are a significant stage in the development of the "Mystic Chord". Whereas in the early compositions Scriabin relied on the German and the French sixth to lead into dominant harmony, here he employs the "Scriabin sixth", a label coined by Hugh Macdonald.[3] It is characterized by the interval of an augmented fifth above the lowered sixth degree:



Example 1: The Italian, French, German, and "Scriabin" sixths.

In alteration with the F-sharp tonic, it concludes the Fourth Sonata, Op. 30. This progression may be reduced as follows:



Example 2: Fourth Sonata, Op. 30, harmonic reduction of the coda.

James Samson notes in his essay "Scriabin":

> Although music still depends on a directional harmonic movement towards these cadence points, whether or not there is an orthodox resolution, the rate of fundamental harmonic change has become very slow, with the "pull" towards the cadence weakened by unresolving dominant quality harmony.[4]

Period III: 1905-1908

As with the second period, the compositions from Op. 44 to 57 center around a symphonic work, the Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54 and a sonata, the Fifth, Op. 53. These works are linked both chronologically and psychologically by a verse poem also titled the Poem of Ecstasy, which Scriabin began in 1904.

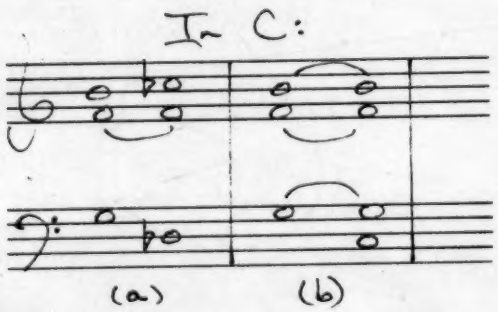
He had been reading a treatise by the Russian-born theosophist Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891), and wrote Tatyana on May 8, 1905 from Paris, "La Clef de la Théosophie is a remarkable book. You will be astonished at how close it is to me. . ."[5] Perhaps inspired by her mystical ideas, he completed and published his own "doctrine" in 1906. The text itself may be judged as an obsessive, ecstatically self-indulgent fantasy:

I summon you to life,
Hidden longings!
    You, sunken
    In the somber depths
    Of creative spirit
    You timid embryos
    Of life,
    To you bring I
    Daring!
. . . . . .
And all of you is a single wave
Of liberty and joy.
Multiplicity has created you.
Legions of feelings
Have elevated you
O pure desires,
I create you,
This complex unity
    This feeling of bliss
    Seizing you completely.
I am the affirmation.
I am Ecstasy.
. . . . . .

That which frightened
    Is now pleasure.
. . . . . .
And the universe resounds
    With joyful cry
    I am!

These mystical theosophic ideas were not used directly as a program of the Poem of Ecstasy but provided impetus for Scriabin's continuing development of a more expressive, more individual, harmonic vocabulary.

Two progressions discussed by James Samson appear more and more frequently in this period:[7]



Example 3: Progressions "a" and "b".

Harmonic stasis is achieved in progression "a" by retaining the third and seventh step of the dominant seventh chord when transposed at a tritone. Progression "b" retains the upper dominant harmony while the dominant-tonic movement is realized in the bass. Scriabin uses these two relationships in sequence with increasing frequency, in order to exploit the contrast of their resolution: examples can be found in many of the short pieces written between 1904 and 1907.

The effect of the final cadential resolutions makes an interesting comparison between the "Poème Fantasque," Op. 45 No. 2, and "Desir," Op. 57 No. 1:

Example 4A: "Poème Fantasque", Op. 45 No. 2, Bars 13-16.

Example 4B: "Desir", Op. 57 No. 1, Bars 13-14.

Tonality is expressed through prolonged harmonic areas in which upper discords are treated as consonances and left without resolution, even at the final cadence.

Period IV: 1908-1915

In 1908, the conductor, millionaire, and music publisher, Sergei Koussevitsky felicitously entered Scriabin's life. Upon founding a new publishing house in April 1908, called the Russian Music Edition, he invited Scriabin, Rachmaninoff, and Medtner to be on the advisory board. He then offered not only to support Scriabin for five years but to publish his works commencing with the Fifth Sonata, Op. 53. Scriabin began Prometheus or the Poem of Fire immediately, with the promise of a full-scale performance by Koussevitsky's orchestra upon completion. It proved to be an expensive and time-consuming project for the conductor; Scriabin scored it for huge orchestra, including two harps, a solo piano part, mixed choir, and color-organ. While he had long associated a color with each pitch and tonality, an instrument invented by Alexander Mozer enabled him to coordinate both in a synthesis of light and music. The scoring for this color-organ or tastiera per luce consists of two lines. The upper line denotes the root of the prevailing harmony. The lower line denotes a "color-melody (moving) by whole tones to symbolize the involution and evolution, the sustaining breathing in and out of the cosmos."[8] The instrument then projects colors synchronizing with the music according to Scriabin's color chart. In addition, the choir sings vowel sounds, each of which corresponds to a color also dictated by him.

The years 1908 to 1909 represent a period of artistic gestation for Scriabin. The spiritual and musical questions which preoccupied him became respectively the metaphysical program of Prometheus

and its constructive method, and were both to remain a constant for all of his remaining piano pieces.

In Prometheus the harmonic coherence achieved in the works of 1907 is now formalized into melodic and harmonic derivation from a given set of notes often called the "Mystic Chord",[9] In fact, the set of usually six notes varied from work to work. With all manner of extensions, suspensions, alterations, and eleven possible transpositions, it is basically a major-minor seventh chord, often disposed with a tritone at the root, with both pure and augmented fourths above. These chords, treated as consonances, are without resolution and exploit relationships resulting from the transposition at the tritone level or "a" type progressions. Progression "b", with its perfect fifth movement, gradually disappears from Scriabin's music. An assessment of this system is given by A. Eaglefield-Hull, one of his earliest biographers:

> The drawback to a system so arbitrarily confined to a few roots only, is the danger of incurring (despite the modern harmonies) a certain monotonous drab in tone and mood. How far Scriabin has succeeded in avoiding this pitfall the hearer must decide for himself; but if shading, phrasing, novel rhythms, unusual root progressions, poetry, exquisite finish, and a bold psychological plan count for anything, then Scriabin easily proves himself a master in a system which would carry in itself the elements of failure with any composer less highly gifted.[10]

Whereas, in the earlier extended works, tonality was the principal means of articulating structure, the later sonatas composed on a non-tonal system were not able to make dramatic and structural use of harmonic variety and contrast. Aaron Copland, in The New Music, criticized the late sonatas for the absence of an integral relationship between the outward, conventional and the inner,

highly individual harmonic-melodic content.[11] Perhaps because of their larger format, they do not achieve the singular fusion of form and content that do the miniatures which Scriabin composed in the last year of his life. These include the aphoristic, enigmatic Poems Op. 71, "Vers la Flamme", Op. 72, Two Dances Op. 73 ("Garlands" and "Dark Flames"), and Five Preludes Op. 74. Their extreme dissonance and concentration of expression push toward the limits of atonality. The melodies are entirely derived from and integrated with the harmony. Scriabin's friend, the critic Leonid Sabaneieff, describes these works:

> Skryabin was obsessed with a certain musical "harmony", an acid chord which fills his compositions and is so characteristic that it even cannot stand imitation, for it immediately evokes the idea of "Skryabin's style." This harmony or chord in variation fills almost the entire contents of the last compositions, giving them the character of a sort of enclosed, narrow, isolated and sequestered musical sphere. . . .[12]

Ironically these final pieces are mere fragments of a work which he had planned for ten years. Scriabin regarded the projected Mysterium as his ultimate masterpiece, a synthesis of all the arts. More than this, it represented for him the "sole purpose and meaning of his existence; not only a work of art, but a cosmic act . . . the salvation of mankind from the bonds of past existence."[13] Music, speech, dance, perfumes, and color-shows were to be united in a kind of ritualized oratorio to be held in the Tibetan mountains. The audience of worldwide pilgrims were to participate and were thus to be purged and reborn on a higher plane of consciousness.

As with the Poem of Ecstasy, he began by writing a symbolic and sensuously appealing text, entitled the Prefactory Action. From

June, 1914 to April, 1915, he labored over the poem, concertized, but composed nothing complete. Among the few sketches surviving, there are no vocal settings. But the presence in the music jottings of twelve tone chords using every note of the chromatic scale is interesting. Berg had experimented with chords of this kind already in 1912.

This apocalyptic work, however inconceivable, was nevertheless characteristic of the writings of his day. The Russian symbolist poets such as Blok and Merežkovsky had all prophesied some cataclysmic event, while other writers took inspiration from the revelations of Marx, Wagner, and Nietzsche. When the First World War and the Russian Revolution did in fact occur, the significance of both these events was misinterpreted.[14]

As it happened, Scriabin did not live to realize his messianic vision or perhaps the error of his thinking. Weakened by a heavy schedule of concerts in England and Russia, he died of blood poisoning in April, 1915.

Scriabin's contribution to his art consists of a body of music continuously evolving from the large extended works of the nineteenth century to systematic atonality. Scriabin's "system" found its beginning and ending in himself. For instance, the original style, musical methods, and religious emphasis of Olivier Messiaen's <u>oeuvre</u> form a striking parallel to Scriabin's works, but are not an "outgrowth". In the final analysis, Scriabin helped to loosen the prevailing harmonic laws of European music.

An examination of the Third Sonata will provide insight to the initial efforts he made in finding his very personal language of musical expression.

Chapter 2

A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD SONATA, OP. 23

Introduction

The Third Sonata was begun in 1897 and completed in the summer of 1898. Preceded by the Piano Concerto, Op. 20 and Four Preludes Op. 22, it was followed by the short orchestral work Rêverie, Op. 24. Belaieff published this sonata in 1898 and it received its first complete performance by Vsevolod Buyukly in November 1900, in Moscow. It consists of four movements:

I. Drammatico: in sonata form
II. Allegretto - con grazia: in "composite"[15] ternary form
III. Andante: in ternary form with a coda transition to
IV. Presto con fuoco: in sonata form

As an example of the style associated with Scriabin's early works, Op. 23 is characterized by polyphonic interplay, clearly delineated periods and overall structure, chromatic sequences, cross-rhythms,[16] elaborate pianistic figurations, colorful chord voicings, and especially, a grandiloquence to which massive dynamic requirements, octave-voiced melodies, and sonority-generating accompaniments contribute.

The First Movement

Marked Drammatico, the initial tempo of the exposition is 69 = ♩, in triple meter. The first subject group is in F-sharp minor. It consists of two periods of four bars each, both periods containing a phrase of two motivic groups and a transposed repetition.

The first motivic group, "a", has an ejaculative rising fourth in the left hand answered by stepwise duplet motion in the right hand:

Example 5: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bar 1.

The second motivic group, "b", follows a descending broken chord outline in triplet motion:

Example 6: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bar 2.

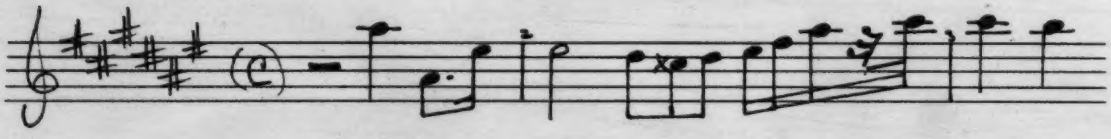
The juxtaposition of duplet and triplet figures create rhythmic interest and tension. The first subject group of eight bars is followed by another eight bars of similar material, marked piano, con sordino. A new motive, "c", appears in bar 11 and bar 15, a decorated version or extension of the ascending "a" motive in the parallel bar 3:

Example 7: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 8-12.

Hugh Macdonald observes:

> The figure . . . with its characteristic trip, is like a written-out rubato, a slight hesitation over the last of the three triplets. It is more a player's mannerism than a composer's.

Macdonald regards it as a melodic "tic" or signature basic to Scriabin's musical thinking, especially when he is moving in triplets:[17]



Example 8: Etude, Op. 8 No. 12, bars 1-3.

Example 9: Prelude, Op. 11 No. 9, bars 31-32.

Example 10: Prelude, Op. 16 No. 4, bars 1-2.

Example 11: Etude, Op. 56 No. 4, bars 21-23.

This transposed repetition of the first subject group passes through the subdominant to the mediant key with lowered third degree, A minor. A transition area, bars 17 to 24, uses both the inverted and original "c" figure in sequence. By means of an augmented sixth chord prolonged over bars 17 to 20 with a temporary chromatic "mutation" to the minor subdominant chord, the second subject group in A major is reached. Brackets show the respective appearances, mutuation, and reappearance of this augmented chord:

Example 12: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 15-21.

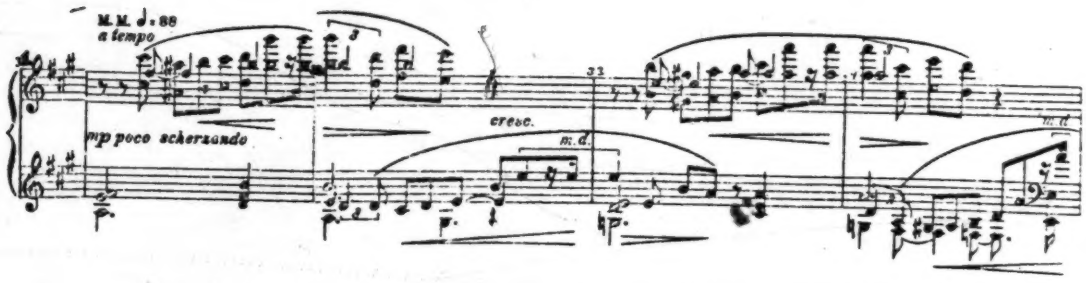
The texture of the first subject group is chordal, with large leaps and open octaves in the left hand. Frequent use of secondary sevenths, avoidance of a cadence defining the tonic, and unprepared dissonances create tension by moving away from the tonal center. The pedal markings indicate that Scriabin wanted the dominant pedal point to blur for a full bar with the upper harmonies and non-harmonic tones. Pedallings are very seldom indicated and are only present for specific effects throughout the sonata. An anacrusis into every bar for twenty-four bars, with the first twelve either on, or jumping to a C-sharp octave in the left hand, functions as a kind of ostinato. It reinforces the rigidly symmetrical structure of two-bar motives, four-bar phrases, and eight-bar periods.

The second subject group, in the relative major key of A, is marked cantabile at 80 = ♩. It consists of three two-bar phrases ("x", "y", and "x" in Example 13). The melodic lines in this polyphonic texture are predominantly stepwise, each phrase descending.

In contrast to the duplet-triplet opposition of the first subject group, the second subject is almost consistently in duplets which contributes to a feeling of calm:

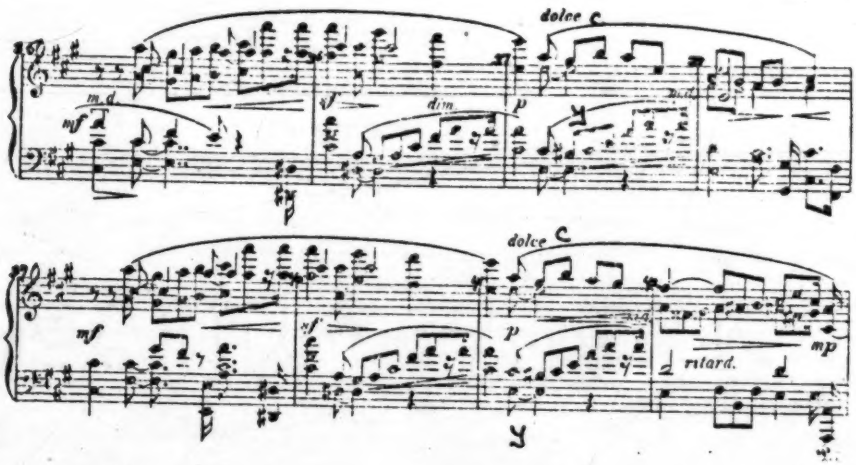
Example 13: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 22-30.

Here the continuous presence of suspensions and seventh chords create a poignancy of sound. After the deceptive cadence which concludes this section a dominant chord is expected. Instead, the submediant is held over into the next section and generates the tension necessary to propel this transition area to the codetta. Marked poco scherzando, the transition tempo indication is 88 = ♩. It utilizes motivic groups from both first and second subjects. The "c" figure from bar 11 is now treated imitatively, overlapping in sequence between the hands. Brief cross-rhythms of duplets and triplets appear in a context of ascending triplet rhythms:



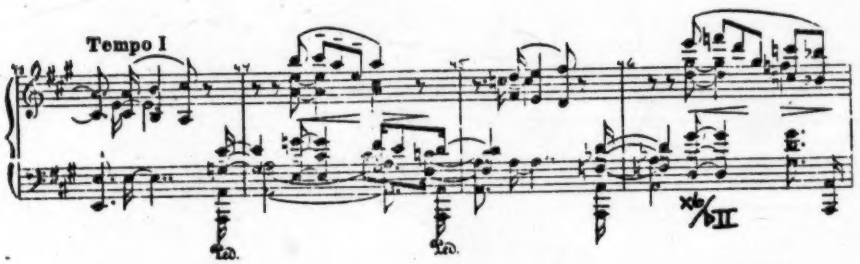
Example 14: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 31-34.

At bars 37 and 41, the second phrase from the second subject group, "y", marked dolce, is interjected between and above the "c" motive, and leads to the first definitive tonic cadence in A:



Example 15: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 35-42.

Bars 43 to 50, marked Tempo I, begin the codetta recalling the opening four-bar phrase of the sonata but supported by an octave-leap pedal point on A:



Example 16: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 43-46.

The resolution of an Italian sixth chord built on the lowered supertonic in bar 46 forms a liaison with the next phrase, a decorated version of the preceding material, with the first motive of the second subject group extended and woven between the voices:

Example 17: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 47-50.

One-bar phrase segments recalling the initial motive "a" then diminish in intensity on a tonic-dominant pedal to close the exposition with a tonic chord on A:

Example 18: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 51-54.

The aggressive drive of the first subject group motives, the cantabile phrase "x", now extended or fragmented, and the "c" motive are developed in four sections through sequential treatment, extension, and contrapuntal juxtaposition.

The first section begins in E, the dominant of the relative major of the original key. The motive "x" is presented in the soprano for the first two bars against the "a" and "b" motives. It descends into the alto in the next two bars, in counterpoint with a new melodic fragment in the right hand. Marked dolcissimo, this is characterized by sequential perfect fifths descending in successively smaller rhythmic units. Interpreting the D-sharp minor chord of bar 56 as the enharmonically equivalent minor chord on E flat, Scriabin modulates in the sequential repetition from E to G-flat major, beginning bar 59:

Example 19: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 55-62.

Pedal changes on the beat and half-beat in this section indicate concern for clearness of the inner line in a gradually increasing dynamic range. Continuing the crescendo to a fortissimo, the next two phrases, on bars 63 to 64, and 65 to 66, are sequential. In the tonic and submediant of F minor respectively, they are basically repetitions of the first two bars of the development with the descending voice doubled at the octave:

Example 20: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 63-66.

The next section, consisting of eight bars, maintains a pedal tone on F in a B-flat minor context. Extended by chromatic

motion over the first four bars (bars 67 to 70), the "x" motive is presented in the soprano:

Example 21: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 67-70.

It is subsequently repeated in the tenor voice (bars 71 to 74) with an accompaniment derived from the dolcissimo motive appearing earlier. This is the first four-bar segment since the second subject group without cross-rhythms. In combination with a diminuendo, it reinforces a feeling of relaxation:

Example 22: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 71-74.

The third section of the development makes use of the first subject group motives and the "c" motive. The first phrase (bars 75 to 78) modulates from B-flat minor to G-sharp minor by means of the dominant seventh chord which is enharmonically equivalent to the

German sixth of A major. The tonic chord of A in turn is the Neapolitan sixth of G-sharp minor. The second phrase (bars 79 to 82) repeats this modulation scheme sequentially, moving through G-sharp minor to the German sixth of G major to the Neapolitan sixth of F-sharp minor:

Example 23: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 75-82.

The final section of twelve bars remains in the key of F-sharp minor and serves to build up tension heralding the recapitulation. The "c" motive appears in the bass as accompaniment to motive "x" now in augmentation:

Example 24: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 83-86.

Prolonged over bars 91 to 94, the diminished seventh of the dominant of F-sharp minor concludes the development. It is never resolved to a C-sharp chord but proceeds directly into the F-sharp minor reprise. Dramatic preparation of the recapitulation is achieved by the "c" motive and its fragmented repetition an octave lower. Dynamic markings are scant; much is left to the performer to interpret, such as the need perhaps of a large ritardando at the end of the section:

Example 25: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 87-94.

An exact repetition of the movement's first six bars launches the recapitulation, beginning bar 95. This is immediately followed by a short transition derived from bars 23 and 24 which modulates to the second subject group in the tonic major:

Example 26: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 101-102.

The recapitulated scherzando then leads to the coda, also in F-sharp major. Forming an elision with the "y" motive, the coda begins at bar 119 with a six-bar contrapuntal treatment of the "c" theme fragmented in the left hand and in inversion in the right hand:

Example 27: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 117-123.

That cross-rhythms are not present in this pianissimo section is a customary indication of calm for Scriabin. The texture is primarily two-voiced.

Out of the quiet tension generated by the crescendo in bar 123 the first subject group appears at bar 125 marked forte. By

means of a German sixth, it modulates to F-sharp minor. A dominant of the supertonic of G-sharp major followed by a German sixth resolving to the supertonic triad bring the climax of this movement to bar 129:

Example 28: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 124-128.

The climax is a four-bar phrase with dynamic level maintained at fortississimo. The highest point of tension, on a diminished seventh chord with its root delayed by the unprepared G-double-sharp octave dissonance, initiates the phrase. Using chromatic decoration, it is an extension of the "x" motive:

Example 29: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 128-135.

The closing twelve bars of the coda beginning at bar 133 parallel the earlier codetta, bars 43 to 54, and now cadence in the tonic major, F-sharp major.

Summary

Table 1 on the following page reviews the first movement's tonal construction. Relationships between the major structural points follow the early nineteenth-century practices associated with sonata form; the first subject group in the minor key, the second subject group in its relative major, the recapitulation of both groups in the tonic minor, and the coda in the tonic major are common key patterns.

The development and transition sections have a greater tonal instability effected by remote key juxtapositions and considerable variation of harmonies and harmonic relations within a key. The correspondence between motivic development and increased harmonic

Table 1

Tonal Relationships in the First Movement

EXPOSITION (Bars 1-54)	DEVELOPMENT (Bars 55-94)	RECAPITULATION (Bars 95-144)
First Subject Group (Bars 1-16) F-sharp minor C-sharp minor B minor	Section I (Bars 55-66) E major G-flat minor F minor	First Subject Group (Bars 95-102) F-sharp minor
Transition (Bars 17-24) Augmented sixth chord extension A major	Section II (Bars 67-74) B-flat minor	Second Subject Group (Bars 103-108) F-sharp major
Second Subject Group (Bars 25-30) A major	Section III (Bars 75-82) B-flat minor A major G-sharp minor G major F-sharp minor	Transition (Scherzando) (Bars 109-119) F-sharp major
Transition (Scherzando) (Bars 31-42) A major		Coda (Bars 119-144) F-sharp major B major F-sharp major
Codetta (Bars 43-54) A major Inflection to D major (Secondary Dominant Inflection) A major	Section IV (Bars 83-94) F-sharp minor C-sharp minor	

activity is obvious from the chart. Scriabin's principal means of development in this movement is the presentation of the subject groups in various contrapuntal arrangements. Their sequential reiteration at various levels of transposition results in modulation to distant tonalities. Rather than fragmenting the motives, Scriabin uses them in their entirety or expands their length with extensions and augmentation. The figures accompanying these motives have a pseudo-contrapuntal character and are thinner in sonority than those of the fourth movement.

Registral changes involve the "c" figure, which appears both in tenor and soprano voices, and the first motivic group, "a", which appears both in alto and tenor voices. Also, the extended version of "x" from the second subject group descends into the alto range during the transition section (bars 47-50) and into the tenor range during the development (bars 55-62).

Rhythmic interest is heightened in the development by the juxtaposition of motives from both subject groups. Persistent use of the two- and four-bar phrase throughout this development and throughout the sonata has a very stabilizing effect. The tension of the harmonic language is set against this phrase-rhythm regularity.

The Second Movement

This movement is in "composite" ternary form (or scherzo and trio form), with the first three-part section marked Allegretto. The tempo marking is 160 = ♪. In 4/8 time, it is the only movement of the four with a symmetrical metric division of the bar. E-flat

major is the initial key. As the enharmonic equivalent of D-sharp minor, it is the relative minor of F-sharp major, the tonality which concludes the previous movement. Bar 1 to 8, alternating E-flat major and minor, form the first half of a double period. The second half is a transposed repetition in B-flat major/minor. Two motivic groups are introduced simultaneously in the soprano and bass over the first period. Both are martial, with dotted rhythms, octave doublings, stressed downbeats, and symmetrical phrase structure:

Example 30: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 1-8.

The right-hand motive group, "d", consists of three phrases joined by elisions. The first phrase is in E-flat major, the second and third in E-flat minor. Melodic motion in bars 1 to 4 mostly outlines intervals of a third with emphasis on the repeated dominant tone:

Example 31: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 1-4.

Two motivic units of later structural importance comprise the material of the third phrase. An ascending scale-like figure in E-flat minor, "e", characterized by a dotted sixteenth- and thirty-second-note rhythm, is a diminution of the three-note rhythmic motive beginning the first phrase:

Example 32: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bar 5.

The following motive, "f", a descending interval in dotted rhythm, is repeated for two bars and swells with each repetition from a fifth to a minor sixth to a major third:

Example 33: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 6-8.

The motivic group, "g", confined to the left hand, resembles in several ways the left-hand motive of the first subject group in the previous movement. The ascending leap of a sixth from an anacrusis, the repeated dominant pedal tone inherent in the motive's structure, and octave voicings are similarities:

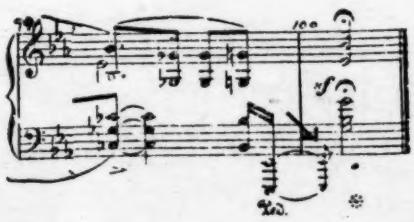
Example 34: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 1-3.

While the drammatico motives of the first movement were characterized by a "statement-response" relationship between the hands, rhythmic activity in the relatively independent motive groups "g" and "d" is fairly constant. The march-like quality of the rhythms throughout this section is homogenous, unlike the rhythmic irregularity of the first movement with its use of triplets and cross-rhythms. Propulsive energy is generated by a consonant grace-note octave to the climax chord of each phrase:

Example 35: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 1-4.

It also provides the lower portion of a resonance encompassing a large range of the keyboard:

Example 36A: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bar 12.



Example 36B: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 99-100.

Many more instances of the grace-note used as a sonority-generating device occur in Scriabin's oeuvre:

Example 37: Fifth Sonata, Op. 53, bars 417-421.

The upper melodic lines of bars 1 to 4 in combination with the left-hand motives simultaneously outline triadic motion rather than

concurrent stepwise motion. Thus the indicated pedalling catches only consonant sonorities.

The initial piano, con sordino, and Allegretto markings suggest a lighter scherzo movement. If such an interpretation is intended, the performer must nevertheless cope with the problem of avoiding accumulated sonority in this leaping chordal texture.

The double period concludes on an unusual submediant to tonic cadential progression in B-flat minor/major:

Example 38: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 13-16.

The development of motives "e" and "f" determines the structure of the next fourteen bars which modulate from B-flat minor via F minor and A-flat major to the original key of E-flat major. A greater frequency of non-harmonic tones increases the degree of dissonance. Bars 17 to 24, constituting the first phrase group, treat "e" imitatively between the hands:

Example 39: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 16-20.

The climax is achieved in bars 25 to 30 using "e" over a broken A-flat chord followed by "f" in one-bar phrases. The period subsides to a half cadence in E-flat major in bar 30:

Example 40: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 21-30.

The first period returns for seven bars, but instead of reaching an imperfect cadence as occurred in the parallel bars 7 to 8, the preparatory submediant chord is repeated and forms a bridge to the animato, bars 39 to 42. Both harmonic and rhythmic activity are increased in these four bars. The "f" motivic unit, for instance, appears in diminution, echoing the rhythmic topography of the "e" motives. Thumb crossings result from a narrower range

between the hands. The bass accompaniment is derived from the first subject group of the left hand. This "snatching" bass figure with its octave span and wide displacements is common in other works of this period (Prelude, Op. 33 No. 4 and Concert Allegro, Op. 18)[18] and generates much sonority while retaining its imitative character. It outlines a circle of fifth relationships, with some chromatic alteration to accommodate a German sixth progression leading to the tonic of E-flat major:

Example 41: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 36-42.

The gradual accelerando to bar 43 prepares the closing stretto based on the first phrase of "d". The final four bars of the Allegretto section function both as a cadential extension and a bridge with harmonic continuance into the next section. Above a tonic pedal tone, the motive "f" outlines a tonic-dominant progression. The latter chord then functions as the dominant of the dominant of A-flat major:

Example 42: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 43-50.

Introducing the "trio" section is the direction con grazia with the tempo indication slightly faster at 168 = ♪. It follows rounded binary form; the outer double periods are eight bars in length while the inner phrase group is fourteen bars. In contrast to the strong rhythmic drive of the preceding section, the "trio" is characterized by lyrical lines, a softer dynamic range from a prevailing pianissimo to one mezzo-forte, and more stepwise motion within a texture of polyphonic interplay. Cross-rhythms and ornamental triplet sixteenths serve to maintain rhythmic and melodic flow.

The legato line and harmonic rhythm of the first two-bar phrase contrast subtly with the fragmented descending duplets in a faster harmonic rhythm of the consequent two bars. Because each duplet phrase begins on the upbeat, the downbeat seems shifted to the anacrusis, emphasizing the placement of harmonic changes and propelling the material forward by the energy of the syncopation:

Example 43: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 51-54.

The first two phrases are repeated with a modulation in the consequent phrase, bars 57 to 58, to the relative minor, F minor.

The middle phrase group is itself in three divisions. The first long phrase of four bars, bars 59 to 62, is essentially a decorated and extended version of bars 51 to 52. The cohesive element here is an ascending scale figure in the soprano voice over a sequential two-bar bass pattern:

Example 44: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 59-62.

Beginning in F minor, in a harmonic texture composed mostly of seventh chords, the phrase modulates to B-flat minor, but avoids any cadence defining the tonic. The text four bars leading back to A-flat major make use of the descending motive "f" from the preceding Allegretto section in a sequential two-bar pattern:

Example 45: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 63-66.

The final phrase of this middle section, bars 67 to 72, is characterized by an anticipation on each weak eighth of every chord change, reinforcing the rocking rhythmic feeling of the entire con grazia section:

Example 46: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 67-72.

The six bars close with a half cadence and move immediately into a reprise of the first double period. The upbeat to bar 77 differs from its parallel in bar 54 by moving chromatically to the subdominant area of the original key. D-flat is implied over the next four bars but is never confirmed by a cadence. The consequent phrase, extended to four bars by sequential duplets in the right hand and ornamental triplet accompaniment, cadences in E-flat major:

Example 47: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 77-82.

This movement closes with the return of the Allegretto material at bar 83 but minus the grace-note ornament to facilitate even greater speed in the stretto. The latter alternates major and minor chords on E-flat, culminating in an extension in E-flat minor of the falling duplet motive and concludes in E-flat major.

Four bars before the close, Scriabin begins to mark long pedallings, to further increase the already fortissimo dynamic level. Although pedal indications remain scant, sforzando and tenuto markings and accents on structurally important harmonies increase in this and in the two subsequent movements.

Summary

An overview of this movement's tonal relations is shown in Table 2.

The predominance of tonic-dominant progressions in the Allegretto section strongly reinforces the tonality. On the other hand, ambiguity and restlessness are created by alternating major/minor modalities at the beginning and closing points. In ternary

Table 2

Tonal Relationships in the Second Movement

A. Allegretto	B. Con grazia	A. Allegretto
I. Bars 1-8	I. Bars 51-58	I. Bars 83-90
E-flat major	A-flat major	E-flat major
E-flat minor	II. Bars 59-72	E-flat minor
Bars 9-16	F minor	Animato Bars 91-94
B-flat major	B-flat minor	E-flat minor
B-flat minor	D-flat major	Stretto Bars 95-100
B-flat major	I. Bars 73-82	E-flat major
II. Bars 17-30	A-flat major	E-flat minor
B-flat major	D-flat major	E-flat major
B-flat minor	E-flat major	
F minor		
A-flat major		
E-flat major		
I. Bars 31-38		
E-flat major		
E-flat minor		
Animato Bars 39-42		
E-flat minor		
G-flat major		
E-flat major		
Stretto Bars 43-50		
E-flat major		
E-flat minor		
E-flat major		

forms, the subdominant relationship of the A-flat *con grazia* to the E-flat *Allegretto* is conventional.

Like the first movement, polyphonic interplay forms the predominant texture and several motives of both movements are characterized by octave doubling and disjunct motion. Motivic development occurs in the sections marked "II" on the overview, and during the *animato* and *stretto* climaxes. Unlike the first movement, fragmentation and diminution are the devices used here.

Again the four-bar phrase with the occasional two-bar variation determines the phrase rhythm.

The Third Movement

This movement is in simple ternary form in the key of B major, an augmented fifth above E-flat major of the previous movement, and a perfect fourth above the first movement's F-sharp minor-major tonality. (Both slow movements of the First and Second Symphonies are also in B major.)

The first section, marked *Andante*, 63 = ♩., is in triple meter and falls into two periods. As in the previous movement, each phrase begins with an upbeat, and the texture is contrapuntal. The soprano has the dominant voice, which in the first phrase is combined with a descending melody in the tenor and a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the alto voice. Dotted rhythms and triplet motives descending in triadic intervals recall some of the features of the first movement's "a" and "b" motives. A brief octave motive appears in the tenor voice as a connecting device in bar 2 and again in bar 4.

Scriabin was said to have played it "as if the melody of the left hand were accompanied by the ringing of silver bells".[19]

Example 48: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 1-4.

The third and fourth phrases are fragments of the soprano line, that is, the initial four-note rhythm. An inverted three-note version of this motive appears in the tenor:

Example 49: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 5-6.

Consistent use of seventh chords and a secondary dominant chord heighten melodic tension along with a crescendo marking through bars 5 and 6. The climax is achieved in the first period with a German sixth on the anacrusis to bar 7. Marked subito piano, it moves to a tonic chord in B:

Example 50: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 4-10.

This material is repeated exactly in the next period, but modulates to the minor mediant key of D-sharp minor, with the soprano melody of the climax doubled in octaves. This phrase, on the dominant pedal tone, is notable for its use of appoggiaturas:

Example 51: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 14-16.

A free rhythm is implied by the very widely spaced, sometimes arpeggiated left-hand chords. The slight delaying of the downbeat effected by the grace-notes in the closing modulation have a dramatic function similar to agogic pauses.

The D-sharp modulation proves to be the dominant of G-sharp minor, the key of the doloroso section. Marked 72 = ♩, the tempo is slightly faster. Polyphonic texture persists with the principal voices in the bass and soprano, while an unbroken filigree figure of sixteenth-notes accompanies in the alto voice. The large number of non-harmonic tones in this figure greatly increase the harmonic tension.

The first period consists of two, two-bar phrases, each repeated once over the dominant pedal tone. The antecedent phrase contains disjunct motivic units: a dotted rhythm on the D-sharp pedal, "m", and a four-note descending motive in the soprano voice, "n", which subsequently combines with "m" in the tenor range:

Example 52: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 16-18.

The consequent phrase has an ascending B-major scale in octaves against a descending B-major scale in the soprano, together reaching a half cadence in G-sharp minor:

Example 53: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 19-20.

The second period presents a short development of the motive "m", Heard in the upper voice of bars 24 to 25, marked forte, and again, an octave down in the tenor voice, marked piano, it is supported by a pedal tone shifting from D-sharp to E. With a semitone transposition upward, "m" appears in the same disposition over two more phrases:

Example 54: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 23-28.

The closing period of the doloroso section consists of two phrases. The first reaches a feminine cadence in the Neapolitan area of B major, but the simplicity of this progression in C is obscured by many upper- and lower-neighbour non-harmonic tones and an appoggiatura octave delaying the resolution:

Example 55: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 29-30.

The second phrase, bars 31 to 32, is a bridge passage in B major reached via a German sixth. Supported by a dominant pedal point, the phrase leads to the recapitulation of the Andante section in bar 33:

Example 56: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 31-34.

The sixteenth-note accompaniment continues, giving this reprise the character of an ornamented variation of the first section. At the conclusion of the first period in bar 40, a simple triad on the

subdominant of B major is heard, while simultaneously the accompaniment becomes a sixteenth-note triplet figure marked pianissimo. Triplets here, as in the preceding con grazia movement, increase the fluidity and rhythmic freedom of the melodic lines:

Example 57: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 38-41.

From bars 42 to 43, the bass outlines tonic-dominant progressions in B, establishing the key firmly in preparation for a second variation of the Andante section. This begins on the last third of bar 43, with the upper melody now in the tenor, ornamented by descending arpeggio figures, a common accompaniment device for Scriabin (see the Op. 8 No. 11 Etude). The bottom of each of these figures provides and perpetuates the tonic pedal on B which functions for ten bars. The upper triplets group into sequentially descending pairs and diminish in volume to a pianissimo in bar 50:

Example 58: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 43-50.

At this point, the upbeat to bar 51, the drammatico motive of the first movement returns for four bars. Its spare texture and disjunct statements contrast with the elaborate preceding sextuplet accompaniment. Altered in character by the dynamic, the poco ritardando markings, and sensitive colorings of each chord progression, the "quotation" of this motive is dramatically very effective:

Example 59: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 51-54.

A bridge to the final movement follows. It retains the rhythm of the left-hand octave motive, but introduces a new rocking dotted motive in the right hand, swelling on an authentic cadence into the next movement in F-sharp minor:

Example 60: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 55-58.

Summary

The tonal scheme of this movement is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3

Tonal Relationships in the Third Movement

A. Andante	B. Doloroso	A^1. Andante
Bars 1-16	Bars 17-32	Bars 33-54
B major	G-sharp minor	B major
D-sharp minor	C major	Transition
	B major	Bars 55-58
		F-sharp minor

The tertial relationship between the two principal keys, B major and G-sharp minor, articulates the structural divisions of this movement. As in the previous two movements, contrapuntal texture and motivic development are interdependent. But here a constant accompaniment in the inner voice, first eighth notes, and later sixteenths in duplets succeeded by triplets, ornaments the texture. This is in part responsible for the atmosphere of improvisatory lyricism.

The Fourth Movement

This movement follows sonata form, beginning in the key of F-sharp minor, the initial key of the first movement. Marked Presto con fuoco, the first subject group is in triple meter, 58 = ♩., and consists of a period of eight bars. The initial two-bar phrase formed by the motivic unit "j", and its exact repetition, comprise the first four-bar phrase group. Characterized in part by a rising

fourth on the anacrusis to the second beat, this motive resembles some of the elements of motive "a" in the first movement:

Example 61: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 1-4.

The dotted rhythm on the second beat and subsequent descending chromatic motion contrast the predominantly disjunct motion of the second motivic unit "k" comprising the second half of the period. The motive of this phrase group is one bar in length and is repeated three times, each time initiating from an anacrusis on A to the second beat of the bar. Every repetition spans a larger intervallic distance outlining an F-sharp minor chord:

Example 62: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 5-8.

Two elements in the shape of both motives contribute to the diabolic con fuoco feeling of the first subject group. One is the persistent

dotted-note rhythm. The other is the harmonic-rhythmic syncopse ending each motive. In "j" this "snap" is reinforced by the sudden harmonic activity of an implied dominant to tonic progression on the last beat. The snap of "k" covers first an octave, then a tenth, a fifteenth, and returns to an octave. This progression gives the period shape and tension.

Unlike the contrapuntal lower-voice textures of the previous movements, the figure played by the left hand here provides a tonic ostinato for the entire first subject area. Although rhythmically active, the bass figure is a steady and unvaried repetition of a bar-long pattern. No cross-rhythms exist in a vertical relationship between the hands. However, the pattern of a broken chord in triplets for two beats followed by four sixteenths for one beat has inherent rhythmic contrast:

Example 63: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 1-3.

Many of the smaller pieces from this period maintain a compact sonority easily spaced for the hand and largely confined to the center of the keyboard (Prelude, Op. 11 No. 13, Prelude, Op. 13 No. 3). The larger works, especially the sonatas, exploit a wide range of the keyboard (as well as developing and sustaining material over a longer time span). The left-hand ostinato figure here is just such a solution for generating and sustaining sonority between

motivic statements in the right hand. The support of the pedal is assumed, as Scriabin specifies legato articulation beneath the initial notes of the bass.

Bars 9 to 16 complete the first subject group. They constitute repetitions of the preceding period, but double-thirds now decorate the upper voice of "j" and a tenor line appears in the left-hand texture. Bars 11 to 12 introduce harmonic color in the F-sharp minor context with a Neapolitan sixth inflection. The period closes with a plagal cadential progression on bars 15 to 16:

Example 64: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 10-16.

The transition section "t" from bars 17 to 36 modulates to the second subject group. Bars 17 to 24, constituting the first period, are a restatement of both motives of the first subject group but in counterpoint with a chromatically decorated F-sharp minor scale in octaves. The "j" motive appears in octaves in the bass, while "k" retains its original position in the alto range. Rhythmically startling is the three-note ascending triplet in octaves at

bar 24 which Scriabin marks accelerando and which concludes the preceding octave scalar figure. Like the harmonic-metric syncopes of the "snap" figures, it reinforces the con fuoco temperament of this movement:

Example 65: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 17-24.

The first subject has built very little in dynamic level, from a piano at the outset within which each motivic statement is shaped by a swelling, to a mezzo-forte in bar 17. But this erupts to a sforzando fortissimo in bar 19 of the transition and subsides over the next five bars to the piano level of the next period. In bars 25 to 28, the "j" motive appears again in octaves over two sequential phrases. The harmonic scheme of the first phrase in F-sharp minor is essentially a tonic chord plus raised sixth moving

chromatically to a dominant seventh chord. The subsequent bars are sequential transpositions of a tonally transient nature:

Example 66: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 25-28.

One-bar fragments of "j" forming bars 29 and 30 increase in tension and volume to a climax in bar 31:

Example 67: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 29-31.

Here the second motive group, "k," appears again, harmonized by the diminished seventh chord of the dominant of A, moving to a "Scriabin sixth" chord (D-sharp, F, A, and C-sharp), and resolving to a tonic second inversion chord and full tonic:

Example 68: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 32-35.

After such a highly chromatic area, with the bass figuration consisting of many sevenths and augmented fifths, the emergence into a consonant A major resolution is a relieving contrast.

Prepared by the markings dolce and ritardando of bar 36, the Meno mosso section or second subject area, with tempo marking 92 = ♩, arrives on bar 37. The motives are stated in a three-part form, "r", "s", and "r1". The initial four-note pattern formed by the semitone anacrusis and dotted rhythm on the downbeat resembles closely both "j" and "k" of the Presto section. However, the first motive of the second subject group, "r", begins a beat earlier and has an expressive falling interval of a fifth rather than a semitone:

Example 69: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 36-40.

"R" is a four-bar phrase in the soprano supported by a disjunct melodic motion in the bass. The key of A is confirmed by a dominant-tonic progression to bar 39. Repeated in the next four bars with a parallel cadence to the dominant, "r" is then followed by a second, more active motive, "s". Marked mezzo-forte and characterized by an arpeggiated grace-note figure and a falling sixth, it is two bars long and repeated immediately in bars 47 to 48. Duplets in the first motive contribute to the prevailing calm; in contrast, the appearance of triplets in the bass against the upper duplets and the added activity of arpeggiated grace-notes in the melodic line undermine the serenity of the "s" motive:

Example 70: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 45-48.

"R" returns in bar 49, altered by rhythmic and intervallic changes in the first four notes and the continuing triplet accompaniment in the bass outlining dominant harmony. An extension of its last bar modulates with an accelerando and crescendo to a bridge of four bars on F-sharp minor, bars 55 to 58. This bears a rhythmic resemblance to the bridge passage closing the third movement and to the second motive of the first subject group, "k":

Example 71: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 55-58.

The development falls into four sections. It begins with an eight-bar exact reiteration of the first subject group. As a return of the tonic and familiar material, it may serve to reduce tension and therefore throw into greater relief the increased harmonic activity and dramatic build-up of the development. Subsequently, motive "j" is repeated as per bars 9 to 10, but is extended by means of chromatic tones over two more bars ("j1"):

Example 72: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 65-70.

Cross-rhythms appear for the first time (bar 68), increasing the tension.

"j1" becomes very important in the next section, a twenty-four-bar development of both it and a motivic unit "j2" from bar 73. They form the antecedent and consequent phrases respectively of two sequential periods:

Example 73: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 71-78.

The first period moves from A to an E-major chord. The "j1" phrase, a chromatically descending line in octaves, is accompanied by the original bass figure of the first subject group. Triplets in ascending and descending patterns accompany the "j2" phrase.

The next period, bars 79 to 86, transposes this material moving from E to a B-major chord. Two four-bar phrases follow, repetitions of "j2" only, and move chromatically through B major to G-flat major. The simple triads serving as points of orientation every four bars provide tonal direction. The harmonies are continually moving and dynamic. Particularly the "j2" motive exhibits involved chromatic motion. Delayed chord tones are reached at

desynchronized intervals, a common Wagnerian treatment. The harmonies are ambiguous.

At bar 95, a new section begins of eight bars length. In the bass, a rhythmic motive not unlike the "snap" figures appears:

Example 74: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 95-98.

In the upper line, the inversion of "j" is heard in octaves for two phrases. The two successive phrases revert to the original form of the motive:

Example 75: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 99-102.

At bar 193, the fourth and final section of the development begins. Its texture is contrapuntal, four entrances each stating the "j" motive a fourth higher than the last. This is one instance of motivic development by imitation, in combination with the frequently

used device of sequential movement. The dynamic level increases with each entrance:

Example 76: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 103-107.

The first four-bar phrase is repeated at bar 107, transposed up a semitone. The next six bars of two three-bar phrases are a welcome change from the rigid adherence to four-bar structures. Functioning as a stretto, the entrances beginning at bar 111 are a tritone apart, and each enter a beat earlier. Both phrases continue the rising bass line begun by the previous two phrases: B-flat, B, C, D-flat:

Example 77: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 108-120.

Logically then, the next section, the climactic return of the transition material, "t," should be in D major, which it is. The second fortississimo of the entire piece is required here. Modulating to F-sharp minor in the next highly chromatic eight bars, the transition parallels bars 25 to 33. At bar 137, the second subject group is recapitulated, this time in F-sharp major. This is followed by a bridge in D-sharp minor, similar in structure to bars 55 to 58. It leads to what could be considered a further development of the first subject group beginning at bar 159. Motives "j" (in octaves) and "k" are presented over bars 167 to 170 in the key of B major, and repeated immediately in G major:

Example 78: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 164-174.

At bar 175, a sudden pianissimo begins an extended figure of eight bars developing the "k" motive by chromatically descending progressions:

Example 79: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 175-182.

The next section of eight bars, 183 to 190, again presents motives "j" and "k" over two periods. "J" is no longer in octaves

but appears in the alto voice decorated by double-thirds above it. The left-hand accompaniment is changed however: a triplet quarter-note figure descends to a C-sharp pedal tone on the first two beats of every bar. This dominant pedal prepares the coda for nineteen bars, and the resulting cross-rhythm between the hands helps to increase tension:

Example 80: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 183-190.

At bar 193, and again at bar 196, the bass figure is abandoned for a one-bar interjection of the "snap" motive of "j". The sudden change in texture is very effective:

Example 81: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 191-198.

From bars 197 to 201 a bridge based on motive "k" moving chromatically and extended from the usual four to six bars leads to the coda. The descending triplet accompaniment has now expanded over a full three beats. A similar bass figure is found in the Fifth Sonata during the Presto:

Example 82: Fifth Sonata, Op. 53, bars 47-56.

Tenuto markings and a ritardando emphasize the progression to the final fortississimo of the movement:

Example 83: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 199-204.

The coda, marked Maestoso, 50 = ♩., is the metamorphosis of the Andante melody introduced in the third movement. Thematic transformation of this type is characteristic of many of Scriabin's

larger works. The themes of the slow introductory movements appear in the codas transfigured in temperament by their treatment. Examples of this practice are found in the Fourth and Fifth Sonatas, and especially in Prometheus. For Chopin this becomes a new principle of sonata form in the Third and Fourth Ballades and even the Barcarolle and Polonaise Fantasy. E. T. Cone examines this phenomenon:

> Chopin uses an important device that I somewhat extravagantly refer to as apotheosis: a special kind of recapitulation that reveals unexpected harmonic richness and textural excitement in a theme previously presented with a restricted harmonization and a relatively drab accompaniment. The clearest example is probably the reprise of the chief theme of the Polonaise Fantasy. This is Chopin's version of what, in Liszt and Wagner, becomes a thoroughgoing method of theme-transformation; and it is a clue to what finally emerges as a candidate for the Romantic form principle.[20]

Another example of this then is the treatment of the first theme of the third movement. Previously presented with a slow harmonic rhythm and a thinner, contrapuntal accompaniment, it appears transformed at bar 202 in augmentation, marked fortissimo. Its accompaniment is chordal and disjunct, with a tonic chord reiterated every second bar. At bar 206, it is answered by the "j" motive in octaves in the left hand:

Example 84: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 202-210.

The entire six-bar phrase is then transposed sequentially down a tone.

Beginning at bar 218, the "j" motive is repeated so regularly that it takes on the function of an ostinato for twelve bars. Against this figure, the Maestoso melody is fragmented, providing material for an extension:

Example 85: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 217-225.

The closing ornamentation of this phrase, recalling the filigree alto accompaniment of the third movement, inflects the harmony back to an F-sharp minor triad.[21] The final cadence over six bars progresses from a German sixth, to the subdominant with raised third, to the tonic of F-sharp minor in second inversion. Motive "k" provides the upper line, and with its "snapping" intervals and rhythmic shape, climaxes the tempestuous, diabolic build-up of the previous material. Dramatic pauses are effected by the full bar of silence which separates each of these cadential harmonies and which concludes the movement:

Example 86: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 224-235.

Summary

Table 4 gives a tonal map of the fourth movement.

Key relationships between the major structural points of this movement are traditional as per early nineteenth-century practice. Less conventional is the harmonic language of the developments and transitions. Chromatic, sequential accompaniments move the material of the first development through many key areas. Brief secondary dominant relationships and modal inflections are pervasive in all sections. Scriabin's treatment of non-harmonic tones by non- or delayed resolution recalls that of Wagner. By dispersing chord members and desynchronizing their resolutions, Scriabin was able to

Table 4

Tonal Relationships in the Fourth Movement

EXPOSITION (Bars 1-58)	DEVELOPMENT I (Bars 59-116)	RECAPITULATION (Bars 117-159)	DEVELOPMENT II (Bars 160-203)	CODA (Bars 202-235)
First Subject Group (Bars 1-16)	First Subject Group (Bars 59-70)	Transition (Bars 117-136)	Section I (Bars 160-166)	Maestoso (Bars 202-204)
F-sharp minor	F-sharp minor	D major	D-sharp minor	F-sharp major
Transition (Bars 17-36)	A major	F-sharp minor	B major	Sotto voce (Bars 225-235)
F-sharp minor	Section II (Bars 71-94)	Chromatic harmony	Section II (Bars 167-174)	F-sharp minor
A minor	A major	F-sharp major	B major	
Chromatic harmony	E major	Second Subject Group (Bars 137-154)	G major	
A major	B major	F-sharp major	Section III (Bars 175-182)	
Second Subject Group (Bars 36-54)	G-flat major	C-sharp major	B minor chord--chromatically descending harmony to dominant seventh of C-sharp major	
A major	Section III (Bars 95-102	F-sharp major	Section IV (Bars 183-202)	
E major	G-flat major	Bridge (Bars 155-159)	C-sharp major (dominant preparation)	
A major	B-flat minor	D-sharp minor		
Bridge (Bars 55-58)	Section IV (Bars 103-116			
F-sharp minor	modulating chromatic ascending line			

obscure or conceal the conventional harmonic progression underlying the extended non-harmonic tones.[22]

The relatively greater range of patterns in both developments and in the coda make this movement a more effective treatment of sonata form than that of the first movement. The return to the tonic before Development I is a reduction of tension and loosening of formal structure. This helps to define and offset the dramatic tension of the last movement which, rather than resolving the tensions of the sonata, climaxes this work.

Conclusions Concerning the Entire Sonata

Whereas Beethoven experimented in moving to substitute dominant areas for his secondary tonalities (such as the mediant or submediant keys), the Romantic composers, according to Rosen, use "secondary tonalities [which] are not dominants at all, but subdominants; they represent a diminishing tension and a less complex state of feeling."[23]

The Third Sonata, however, is in no way innovative in its tonal reference points. Scriabin moves from tonic to relative major/minor in the relationship between the first and second subjects of three of its movements. Only the second movement, with its tonic E-flat and subdominant A-flat relationship does not conform. Yet, within the Allegretto, tonic-dominant polarity is established.

Scriabin's rather unimaginative use of strict eight-bar phrase groups was a direct influence of Chopin. In studying the

latter's dance movements, E. T. Cone notes that the hypermeasures are obvious to the listener, and sometimes overly persistent. Despite irregularities of cross-rhythm and syncopation, he declares, the strict four-by-four design of the phrasing is undisturbed.[24]

Motivic development is affected by the rigid phrase construction in all four movements. The most predominant technique is that of sequential treatment which generates musical energy because it implies and provokes continuation. Thus, sequences constitute much of the passage work in developmental areas of all the movements. Sequences are motivically, rhythmically, and harmonically related so that a recurrent use of this device in a strict periodicity can exacerbate metric uniformity. As a result, a certain creative structural freedom so common in Strauss, Mahler, and Debussy is absent through all the movements.

Contributing to the success of this sonata is Scriabin's balanced treatment of dramatic excitement and relaxation. All the first subject groups are without exception eight bars long followed by an eight-bar repetition, which either modulates at the outset or towards the cadential close. The second subject groups of the inner movements, both ternary, are eight bars while the two belonging to the outer sonata form movements are respectively six and eighteen measures. Durational balancing achieves the proportion between tension and stability amid the subject groups and transitions of the outer movements. For instance, the first subject group of the initial movement moves immediately through several tonal areas. Its dramatic tension, aided by harmonic and rhythmic activity, is

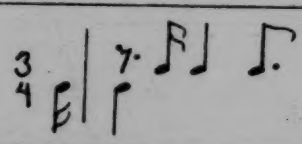
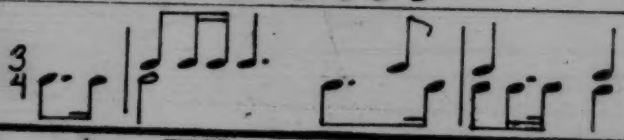
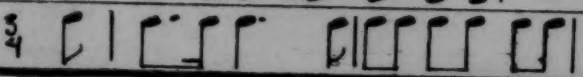
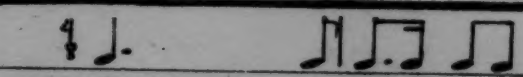
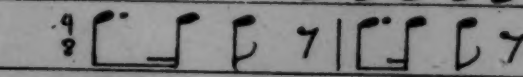
counterbalanced by the short cantabile in combination with the poco scherzando. The latter prolongs the submediant area before finally reaching an authentic cadence. The last movement has a much longer second subject group. Its extra length counterbalances the added tension and structural importance of the highly chromatic transition sections in combination with the first subject group.

Unifying features present in every motivic group in the Third Sonata are the dotted eighth-note rhythm and the anacrusis. Particularly movements two, three, and four show similarities between their two subject groups. The "b" motive of the first movement with its triplet and broken left-hand chord resembles the first phrase of the third movement. Various degrees of rhythmic diminution are evident in the motivic groups of the Allegretto movement. Table 5 gives graphic comparisons of these rhythms.

In conclusion, while a weak performance may not overcome the monotony of rigid phrase periodicity in the Third Sonata, a superior interpretation will turn the thrusting pedal point figures, insistent ostinatos, and dotted-note rhythmic figures to advantage, communicating the undeniable drive of the writing. The intensity of the dramatic and lyric moods is a result of Scriabin's effective use of rhythmic propulsion and vivid harmonic manoeuvering. When properly emphasized, these are the work's strongest qualities.

Table 5

Rhythmic Comparisons Between the Motivic Groups

I "a"	
"x" (soprano)	
II "d" (soprano) "g" (bass)	
First phrase of <u>con grazia</u>	
III First phrase of <u>Andante</u>	
"m" (bass) "n" (soprano)	
IV "j"	
"r"	
I "a" (bass) "b" (soprano)	
III First phrase of <u>Andante</u>	
III "d"	
"f"	
"e"	

Chapter 3

EXTRA-MUSICAL IDEAS AND PIANISTIC STYLE

The evolution of Scriabin's style was directly related to his increasing preoccupation with metaphysical ideas and his corresponding use of music as a medium for their expression, as well as his highly individual exploitation of the piano's expressive possibilities.

While Scriabin did not publish a program for the Third Sonata until 1906, seven years after its composition,[25] he was nevertheless writing similar philosophical musings in his diaries at the time of the Sonata's and the First Symphony's conception. A segment of his diary from 1900 indicates the extent to which he had realized his artistic credo:

> In order to become optimistic in the intrinsic sense of the word, man must have felt doubt, and conquered it. . . . You [Art] allowed me to recognize my infinite strength, my limitless authority, my invincibility. You gave me triumph.[26]

The program of the Third Sonata could well be faithful to the original mood in which Op. 23 was realized, given the writings contemporary with the Sonata. Scriabin subtitled this opus "Etats d'Ame":

I. The Soul, free and wild, plunges into the vortex of grief and strife.

II. An illusory, transient, and treacherous respite; weary of suffering, the Soul attempts to forget, to sing, to bloom inspite of all . . . but the light rhythms, the fragrant harmonies are only a pretence through which the uneasy and ailing Soul penetrates.

III. A sea of feelings, tender and melancholy: love, sorrow, vague desires, inexpressible thoughts, illusions of a fragile dream.

IV. Now the elements renew themselves. The Soul struggles within their vortex of fury. From the depths of the Soul the frightening voice of the creating Being (the Man-God) rises up, whose challenging song rings triumphant. But still too weak to reach the zenith, it stumbles, conquered, into the abyss of nothingness.[27]

Boris Schloezer, the music critic and brother of Scriabin's mistress, Tatyana, interprets this Nietzschean program as related to Scriabin's life:

> Psychological reason for [this sonata] is easy to find: he became aware of himself. . . . Scriabin was one of those few who summoned an ancient god from within the depths of his being and gave external consciousness to it. In short, this is the tragedy of a personality unable to bear his own deification into the Man-God. At the very moment he sounds his song of triumph, he sinks into the abyss.[28]

Whatever the details or interpretation of this program are, the Sonata is recognizably a work of great expressive intensity. Scriabin's early pianistic style, and his use of the four-movement sonata form are the vehicles for this grandiloquent and very personal musical "dramaturgy".

A fundamental element in Scriabin's pianistic vocabulary is his interest in, and understanding of, piano sonority. Historian R. A. Leonard notes that

> Even [in] such early works as the Etude Op. 8 . . . the composer displays, first of all, his intuitive knowledge of piano sonorities. He is playing with the sheer beauty of piano sound, and the infinity of technical means which may be used for its exploitation.[29]

This "infinity of technical means" has been in part examined by Samuel Randlett, who lists some of the pianistic devices and figurations:

> The pedal enriches, blends, and sustains the sonority. The spacing of the notes is determined largely by the demands of sonority; wide stretches and skips on the keyboard are the result of this spacing. Octaves and double-notes intensify the sonority of single lines. Interlocked thumbs solidify the sonority by an overlapping of doublings. It is to suggest certain effects of tonal balance that chords are sometimes marked with staccato dots even though the pedal will be depressed when they are played.[30]

Mention has been made in Chapter 2 of Scriabin's sparse pedal indications in the Third Sonata. These occur primarily where a long damper pedal is desired for special effects:

Example 87: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 41-44.

Articulations affected by pedallings, whether indicated or not, include staccato, slurred staccato, accents, legato, and combinations of these:

Example 88A: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 1-3 and 43-45.

Example 88B: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 21-22 and 26-28.

Example 88C: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 19-20.

In general; Scriabin assumes the performer's ear will be the best guide for the complex and generous use of the pedal which his style demands. Donald Garvelmann observes that

> His piano sonatas present for the pianist the task of finding the right balance between a kind of impressionistic haze and a classical architectural clarity, of playing ff unpercussively, of caressing the piano so that the hammers "disappear," of incorporating a specialized subtle pedalling technique, of "reading between the lines" of the printed musical texts.[31]

Like Brahms, whose dramatic multi-movement sonatas are often described as orchestral pieces for piano, Scriabin exploits the piano's wide range of greater sonority. In doing so, he requires large skips and extended hand positions, especially in the bass. The broken-chord figurations require a strong left-hand technique:

Example 89: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 83-90.

The skips involve octaves and chordal stops in the Third Sonata:

Example 90A: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 36-41.

Example 90B: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 164-166.

Both skipping and arpeggiated figurations occasionally serve in an ostinato-like capacity: each of the twenty-one bars before the Maestoso coda of the fourth movement repeat an octave figuration that reiterates the dominant as its lowest note. Also the initial eight bars of the first movement have an ostinato bass:

Example 91: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 1-8.

A tonic pedal on the lowest note of every bar is present in the first sixteen bars of the last movement:

Example 92: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 1-16.

These expansive accompaniments are descendants of the early Classical and Rococo Alberti bass. The Romantic composers widened its span.

Another device used to extend the hand's reach is the grace-note, either a single note, octave, or chord, always pedalled, and occurring in the second and third movements:

Example 93A: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 31-34.

Example 93B: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 15-16.

Rolled chords perform a similar function, and loosen the rhythmic pulse:

Example 94: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 1-3.

Scriabin also writes them as ornaments in small notes, lightly filling in sonority:

Example 95: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 4, bars 44-50.

A left-hand arpeggio takes on the function of an unusual ornament to the melodic line:

Example 96: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 45-48.

Scriabin often overlaps the voices of his part writing in the middle register in order to produce a more compact sonority:

Example 97A: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 87-94.

Example 97B: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 2, bars 17-20.

He also notates doublings literally, to be played by interlocking thumbs. This keeps each voice separated at its proper tonal level:

Example 98: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 103-104 and bars 114-115.

The voice writing is not consistent; rather its function is to fill out harmony, to join disjunct motives, or to provide continuous sonority whether at a massive dynamic level or a delicate pianissimo.

Although pedalling markings are infrequent, dynamic requirements are relatively less ambiguous and cover a wide range, reinforcing the dramatic, harmonic, and rhythmic content of the piece.

A recurrent element of rhythmic treatment discussed in Chapter 2 is the repeated presence of dotted-note values in Scriabin's motives. This may be an adaptation of Schumann's use of insistent dotted rhythms. Rubato and agogics are unwritten performance treatments of rhythm and are essential to convey the full emotional temperament of this Sonata. As Leonid Sabaneieff records in his biography Scriabin:

> [He] attached great significance to this sonata. Everything that had been embryonic, those individual flashes that had seen light in previous etudes and preludes--his affected tragedy, pathos, broken rhythms in which one feels a fearsome nervosity, eroticism, indisputable strength and color, refinement and elegance--all these were incarnated in it.[32]

Attesting to the success of Scriabin as its interpreter is a review from the London Times of a March 20, 1914 concert:

> Mr. Scriabin charmed a large audience at Bechstein Hall by his exquisite music. . . . The Third Sonata . . . the largest work on the program was the most interesting with its vigorous finale. The first movement is tedious by its insistence on one rhythm, but the finale (which follows two movements, both quite slight) is built on big lines, and the composer's masterly interpretation created a deep impression.[33]

The music critic Grigori Prokofiev, writing for the Russkaja muzykalnaja gazeta, describes Scriabin's pianism more graphically:

> Another of his ways of captivating the audience is the very strong impression he gives of improvising. He breaks the chains of strict rhythm and makes the rhythm sound anew every time he plays, filling his performances with freshness. . . . The secret here is his energetic rhythm.[34]

The most interesting chronicle of Scriabin's playing is a piano roll which he made in 1907 on a Welte-Mignon recording machine.[35] A free-handed interpretation of the text and a remarkably liberal use of rubato, to which the frequent breaking of both large and small chords contributes, characterize his pianistic approach. Bowers, writing a half-century later, judges it "extraordinarily erratic, arhythmical, nervous" playing.[36]

Another expressive rhythmic device occasionally audible on the recording is what could be termed the "pianistic portamento". On stringed instruments and voice, portamento is a continuous gliding from one note to another, sounding all intervening tones.[37] As this would be impossible on the piano, the pianist's equivalent could be construed as the desynchronized sounding of simultaneously written tones between the hands. It is employed in the main to stress expressive intervals within voices. Scriabin's awareness of the portamento as a device to enhance melodic lines in a complex texture is obvious from the piano roll. (His liberal spreading of

chords performs a similar function.)

Certain passages in the Third Sonata suggest that Scriabin attempted to articulate this device in a written-out form. Compare the bass motive's rhythm on the third beats of bars 12 and 13, third movement, with the anacrusis' rhythm, "h," preceding bar 9. For clarity and emphasis of the lower line, Scriabin uses a thirty-second note to differentiate it from the upper activity:

Example 99: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 9-15.

A comparison of "i" at bar 14 in the preceding example and "i" at bar 38 shows a similar treatment of the upper line when the accompanying voice becomes more animated:

Example 100: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 38-40.

Another instance of the relative delaying of pitches is evident in a comparison of the "v" motive in bar 3 with the recapitulated version in bar 35 ("v^1"):

Example 101A: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 1-3.

Example 101B: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 3, bars 32-37.

In the first movement, a descending bass line at bar 32 is rhythmically differentiated from the rising triplets of the "c" motive:

Example 102: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. 1, bars 32-34.

A final example of what may be the written interpretation of the pianistic portamento is also found in the first movement. Introducing the first subject group after a long coda preparation, the "a" motive forms an active rhythmic group with the delayed last tone of the upper triplet. Their rhythmic separation contributes to a clear restatement of the motive "a":

Example 103: Third Sonata, Op. 23, Mvt. I, bars 124-125.

The portamento then is used by some pianists to project voicings or melodically important tones distinctly and expressively. The pseudo-polyphonic nature of Scriabin's music, including many parts of the Third Sonata, may have spurred him to this conscious rhythmic differentiation of lines which has so much in common with the keyboard portamento.

Scriabin's pianism and his metaphysical interests had a great influence on the compositional style and dramatic effect of Op. 23. In keeping with the extra-musical implications of the work, all the movements excluding the third have two essentially contrasting thematic groups. The first subject areas could all be characterized as more dramatic and tension-filled while the second subject groups are somewhat more stable, more lyrical. Dramatic tension, which the first movement initiates, the second movement reinforces, and the third movement temporarily assuages, reaches its summit in the fourth movement and subsequently finds release in the Maestoso coda before the unresolved tenor of the sonata's conclusion.

The extroverted passion and grandeur of Scriabin's Third Sonata is replaced gradually in his mature works by a tendency to

condense rather than to expand his statements, and by an agility, delicacy, and a kind of languor in the writing. His interest in cross-rhythms, sensitivity to piano sonority and to chord voicings, his explorations in chromatic harmony, and his dramatic instinct in this early work are developed in the later style. Its evolution simply required Scriabin's experimentation and need to communicate his metaphysical revelations.

As a culmination point of Scriabin's early period, the Third Sonata draws on many influences but all are modified by his strengthening musical personality and individual technique. Op. 23 then is a summation of all Scriabin could express in the older forms.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Hugh Macdonald, Skryabin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 15.

[2]James Samson, "Scriabin: The Evolution of a Method," Soundings 4 (1974):64-65.

[3]Macdonald, Skryabin, p. 38.

[4]Samson, "Scriabin: The Evolution of a Method," p. 65.

[5]Scrjabin, Pis'ma (Letters), ed. by A. V. Kašnerova (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965), p. 369. "La Clef de la Théosophie zamečatel'naja kniga. Ty budeš' udivlena, do kakoj stepeni blizko ko mne." Trans. by Carolyn Roberts.

[6]Faubion Bowers, Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, 2 vols. (Tokyo and Palo Alto: Kodansha International, 1965) 2:134-135.

[7]Samson, "Scriabin: The Evolution of a Method," p. 65.

[8]Bowers, Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, 2:203.

[9]Ibid., p. 204: "The arrangement of A, D-sharp, G, C-sharp, F-sharp, B, the so-called mystic chord of fourths augmented, diminished and perfect, opens the piece. It is the Ur-chord of many chords in Prometheus."

[10]A. Eaglefield-Hull, "The Pianoforte Sonatas of Scriabin," The Musical Times 57 (December 1916):539-540.

[11]A. Copland, The New Music: 1900-1960 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), p. 37.

[12]L. Sabaneieff, Modern Russian Composers, trans. by J. A. Joffe (New York: International Publishers, 1927), pp. 49-50, obtained from Samuel Randlett, "Elements of Scriabin's Keyboard Style," The Piano Quarterly 74 (Winter 1970-71):22.

[13]Oskar Riesemann, ed. and trans., Die Tagebuchaufzeichnungen Skrjabins: "Prometheische Phantasien" (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlaganstalt, 1924; reprint ed., Munich: Verlag W. Wollenweber, 1968), pp. 8-9. "Das 'Mysterium' das ihm als . . . einziger Sinn seines Daseins erschein, sollte nicht nur ein Kunstwerk sein, sondern ein kosmischer Akt, . . . Erloesung der Menschheit von den Fesseln der gegenwaertigen Daseinform." Eng. trans. by S. M. Hunt.

[14]Cultural and spiritual crises coincided with rapid economic and social change and political repression in Russia during the period 1898-1917. The merging of the spiritual radicalism of the artists and the political radicalism of the left created a tremendous revolutionary force, as discussed by B. G. Rosenthal in Dimitri Sergeevich Merezhkovsky and the Silver Age: The Development of a Revolutionary Mentality (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975).

[15]John D. White, The Analysis of Music (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), p. 54, describes composite ternary form as that "form found most commonly among the minuet and trio movements of the classical period. . . . Both are almost invariably cast as rounded binary forms."

[16]Percy Scholes, The Oxford Companion to Music, 9th ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 879, refers to cross-rhythms as "for instance . . . a conflict of two against three throughout."

[17]For further examples, see Macdonald, Skryabin, pp. 24-26.

[18]Samuel Randlett, "Elements of Scriabin's Keyboard Style," The Piano Quarterly 77 (Fall 1971):25.

[19]M. Meitschik, Erinnerungen an Skrjabin, manuscript in the Skrjabin State Museum. Cited by P. Dickenmann, Die Entwicklung der Harmonik bei A. Skrjabin (Bern: P. Haupt, 1935), p. 33. Trans. by S. M. Hunt.

[20]E. T. Cone, Music Form and Musical Performance (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), pp. 83-84.

[21]Two performances of this piece interestingly repeat the ostinato for another two bars, thus bringing the filigree figure to a climactic c^4. They are Scriabin, Sonata No. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23, performed by Vladimir Horowitz (RCA Victor LM-2005); and Scriabin: 12 Piano Sonatas, performed by Michael Ponti (Vox SVBX 5461), side 3, band 1.

[22]For a further discussion using Schenkerian analysis, see James Baker, "Scriabin's Implicit Tonality," Music Theory Spectrum 2 (1980):18.

[23]Charles Rosen, The Classical Style (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), p. 383.

[24]Cone, Music Form and Musical Performance, p. 80.

[25]Bowers, Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, 1:254-255, reports that Scriabin's mistress Tatyana Schloezer wrote these notes for a recital including the Third Sonata on November 8, 1906 in Brussells. See Scrjabin, Pis'ma (Letters), p. 435n, for a confirmation of this program's existence: "Koncert Skrjabina v Brjussele sostojalsja 26 oktjabrja/8 nojabrja 1906 g. v

zale 'Société Royale la Grande Harmonie'. Programma koncerta (GMS, inv. No. 918):" [Scriabin gave a concert in Brussells on the 26 October/8 November 1906 in the hall, the Société Royale la Grande Harmonie. Concert program (Scriabin State Museum, inventory No.918):] Trans. by Carolyn Roberts.

[26]Riesemann, Die Tagebuchaufzeichnungen Skrjabins: "Prometheische Phantasien," pp. 25-26. Eng. trans. by S. M. Hunt.

[27]Researchers quoting this program, as well as Bowers, include: Lev Danilewitsch, A. N. Skrjabin, trans. by Margarete Hoffman (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Haertel, 1954), pp. 31-32; F. E. Kirby, A Short History of Keyboard Music (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 426.

[28]Bowers, Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, 1:255-256, writes: "To Boris Schloezer, writing in RMG (10 February, 1906) and fresh from conversations with Scriabin, is due a last hermeneutical word." Bowers was referring to the Russkaja muzykalnaja gazeta (St. Petersburg: N. Findeisen, 1894-1917), where Boris Schloezer worked as a music critic until 1917.

[29]R. A. Leonard, A History of Russian Music (New York: Macmillan Co., 1957), p. 220, quoted in Randlett, "Elements of Scriabin's Keyboard Style," The Piano Quarterly 74 (Winter 1970-71):21.

[30]Randlett, op. cit., p. 23.

[31]Garvelmann, "Alexander Scriabin and his Piano Sonatas," brochure for Scriabin: 12 Piano Sonatas (Vox SVBX 5461), p. 2.

[32]Bowers, Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, 1:253.

[33]Ibid., 2:261. Bowers gives the article's date as the 21st of March, 1914, but does not identify the critic.

[34]Ibid., p. 268. Bowers omits the date of the article, but gives (on p. 267) the Moscow concert date as January 27, 1915.

[35]Bowers, The New Scriabin: Enigma and Answers (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), p. 198, cites the Melodiya number D 00031359-60 of the piano roll issued by the Ministry of Culture (presumably of the U.S.S.R.). In Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer, 1871-1915, 2:283, Bowers lists three recordings of Scriabin's performances. I had access to the Recorded Treasures Album 681 (P.O. Box 1278, North Hollywood, California 91604). Bowers also lists the pieces performed.

[36]Bowers, The New Scriabin: Enigma and Answers, p. 198.

[37]Definition obtained from Webster's New World Dictionary (Toronto: Nelson, Foster, and Scott Ltd., 1966).

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(1770-1827)
Allegro molto e con brio
Largo, con gran espressione
Allegro
Rondo: Poco Allegretto e grazioso

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(1872-1915)
"I call you to life, oh mysterious forces!
Buried in the obscure depths
Of the creative mind, sketchy
Outlines of life, to you I bring my proud spirit."
(Poem of Ecstacy, p. 11)

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Molto:

"Durch alle Töne, tönet	Through all the tones rings
Im bunten Erdentraum	In this iridescent earth-dream
Ein leiser Ton, gezogen	A soft tone, drawn
Für den, der heimlich lauschet."	For him who secretly listens.

Fr. Schlegel

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Mässig. Durchaus energisch.
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